

The Spartans finished their storybook season with a record of 32-7, becoming Big 10 regular season co-champions, Big 10 tournament champions, and NCAA champions. Today, Mr. Speaker, I salute Michigan State's accomplishments and share the joy of their victory with MSU students and alumni and especially the people of Flint.

#### NATIONAL SLEEP AWARENESS WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would extend my congratulations to all of the athletes that we have heard talked about. In my own congressional district, the Westinghouse High School boys team went to the finals, lost by three points. Unfortunately, they did not win; but they came close, and, of course, the Marshall High School girls were city champs. They did not win the championship this year, but they have won it so many times until they know that they will be back next year.

Mr. Speaker, last week was National Sleep Awareness Week. I rise today to pay tribute to the work that the National Sleep Foundation and other health professionals are doing in this arena. I think it is important that we recognize the efforts of medical researchers who have devoted their professional careers to studying the impact of fatigue and sleep disorders on our Nation's health, safety, and productivity. We should also take time to reevaluate our own personal health habits and determine how we can improve our own health in order to be stronger and more effective citizens.

While physicians and patients now pay attention to the adverse health impacts of poor nutrition and inadequate exercise, too few people pay attention to the harm that can result from inadequate or disordered sleep. Sleep scientists have linked such ailments as high blood pressure, hypertension, depression, and cardiovascular disease to inadequate sleep. The National Institutes of Health estimate that 40 million Americans suffer from chronic sleep disorders, the vast majority of which remain undiagnosed and untreated; and another 20 to 30 million suffer intermittent sleep-related problems.

The survey conducted by the National Sleep Foundation found that 58 million Americans report suffering excessive daytime sleepiness at levels that interfere with their day-to-day activities. Evidence tells us that America's sleep debt is on the rise. Yet numerous studies have concluded that the general public and primary care physicians lack the basic sleep knowledge to

address these problems. As a result, the toll on human health, safety and productivity is enormous.

This problem is more than simply getting a good night's rest. It encompasses medical problems, lack of education, and the tools required to address this public health concern. Sleepiness, whether the result of untreated sleep disorders, volitional sleep deprivation, or shift work has also been identified as casual factors in a growing number of on-the-job injuries. This corresponds directly in lost productivity, personal injuries, medical expense, property and environmental damage due to sleep disorders and sleep deprivation.

The cost of this problem is estimated by the National Sleep Foundation to exceed \$100 billion each year. It is the personal injuries that are the most tragic part of this equation. However, we hear numerous reports on television and in the news about drivers who fall asleep at the wheel and kill themselves, a family member, or an innocent bystander.

As I alluded to earlier in my statement, there are ongoing research efforts into the impact of sleep deprivation. I am privileged that the Northwestern University Medical School in my district; and one of my constituents, Dr. Phyllis Zee of Oak Park, Illinois, has spent over a decade creating innovative approaches to improved sleep and daytime performance in older adults and by conducting research on the genetic basis for human sleep disorders.

As with any type of important health research, there is also need to provide information to the members of the community at greatest risk. Many minorities, for example, do not receive education on proper sleep habits or recognition of symptoms that could indicate a chronic disorder. Through the work of the National Sleep Foundation, however, outreach to high-risk groups is beginning to change. It is important that we in Congress support these efforts and support strong public education and prevention programs to address this public health issue and this public health crisis.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope that all Americans would look seriously at something as simple as getting enough rest, getting enough sleep and the impact that it can have on enhancing rather than diminishing the quality of life for all of us.

#### STRENGTHENING THE RURAL ECONOMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, the United States has enjoyed the longest sustained period of economic growth in

the history of the Nation. We have gone from record deficits to record surpluses. 20 million new jobs have been created in the last 8 years. We have the highest homeownership rate ever, the lowest unemployment in 30 years, and the lowest poverty rate in 20 years. Under current plans, we expect to eliminate the Federal debt; and we are looking forward to a surplus of more than \$3 trillion over the next 10 years. Farmlands are being transformed into subdivisions overnight.

Ordinarily that would be good, indicating progress. But the transformation of farmland into subdivisions is but further evidence that small ranchers and farmers are a dying breed. At the turn of the last century, close to half of the population in America lived and worked on ranches and farms. With the recent turn of the century, that number has been reduced to only about 1½ percent of the population. In 1900, thousands and thousands of small farms and ranches dotted the countryside, growing tobacco, cotton, wheat, soybeans and other products, raising pigs, poultry, horses and cattle. Today, by contrast, four companies are responsible for 80 percent of the beef market.

Despite the rosy economic picture for some, many in rural America are suffering. Despite the economic boom, many in rural America have not shared in the bounty. In rural America, low-tech factories have been driven out of business by lower paying foreign competitors. Small tobacco growers and other farmers face extinction. The digital divide has left us with two Americas. According to a recent article in the New York Times, large chunks of rural America are being depopulated. Small ranchers and farmers are being impoverished, forcing them to sell out.

The Department of Agriculture reports that wheat is at the lowest price since 1986, cotton at its lowest since 1974, and soybeans at its lowest since 1972. The Times article notes that in one of the poorest rural counties, the average income is less than \$4,000, while in Manhattan, New York, the average income is close to \$70,000. In rural North Carolina, where I come from, last year alone in the State we lost 32,000 manufacturing jobs because of plant closings and layoffs, 43 percent more than we lost in 1998. An old plant closed and a new plant opened in Ashe County. Only 200 of the 300 workers were retained. The new plant laid off workers because computers now do the jobs that they did.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, in many parts of America, the help-wanted ads are full, unemployment rates are low, incomes are high, wealth is being accumulated. Not so in rural America. A \$15 million satellite site opened recently in North Carolina to support the needs of a \$350 million plant. Because of computers, only three workers were hired to operate this satellite plant.

What can we do, Mr. Speaker? We can emphasize education, preparing our students, and training our workers to compete in an increasingly high-tech and global economy. We can provide incentives to business to locate in rural America. We can improve our infrastructure, provide better water and sewer systems.

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We can begin to close the digital divide and provide Internet access to even those in remote, rural areas, and we can improve our roads, helping to get rural goods and services to customers throughout the Nation and throughout the world.

Most importantly, we can and we must use organizations like our recently organized rural caucus as a place to discuss, a place to generate new ideas. We can strengthen the economy in rural America and allow for all of our citizens to share in our Nation's growth. We can close the income and wealth gap in that it is growing between urban and rural America. We can strengthen our economy, Mr. Speaker, in rural America, and we must.

#### EDUCATION IS TOP PRIORITY FOR AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GARY MILLER of California). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, we are here today to talk about the tremendous progress that we have made in education over the past 7 years. Even better, over the past 5 years, we have seen some measurable results. Fourth grade reading scores in high-poverty schools are up. Eighth grade math scores are up. The gender gap in math and science scores are shrinking. The number of advanced placement tests, the AP tests with scores meeting college requirements increased overall, and more importantly, also for minorities and women. More high school students are taking tougher classes and are including the AP classes which are the advanced placement classes. More women and Hispanics and minorities are going to college than ever before. These are all just over the last 5 years.

Mr. Speaker, this is all good news, and the progress we have made has been largely due to the Clinton administration and the efforts they have made throughout the country with good, sound solutions for our Nation's children. Knowing that 90 percent of our school-age population attend public schools, many of us here have worked hard with the administration to ensure that States and school districts are working together to reform their systems where they are. Along

with the reforms is the need to hold our students accountable and make sure that they are held to higher standards. Raising standards, which we have been doing and talking about for much of the past decade, means that all children are reading well by the end of the third grade, and making sure that our eighth graders are on the college track and are taking algebra and geometry.

This is really a reform that has been working, and it is something that we as Democrats feel very strongly about and need to continue to make that commitment.

At the heart of the Clinton administration and the Democrats' reform is the focus on literacy. In 1996, we worked with the administration to implement the America Reads program, which mobilized communities to work together to fight illiteracy. This has been effective, especially with our community colleges working with our local school districts. In addition to the America Reads program, we have made sure that landmark legislation to support local and State efforts to improve literacy through professional development, as well as family literacy programs and tutoring. Let me add that we have found also some startling results, that when we work with parents on literacy, we also find that those youngsters of those parents have a direct impact in making sure that they also stay in school, and a lot of them choose not to drop out.

Reading scores in San Antonio have improved over the last 5 years and it is due to these investments that we have made, both in the Federal and some of the local level areas.

Clearly, ensuring that our children are literate and that reading is a priority is not a new agenda item. The presidential candidates would like to think that it is new. Reading is not a new agenda and claiming credit for educational reform is unfounded.

During a press conference on March 28, Governor George Bush claimed progress for reading scores in Texas. I would like to read an excerpt from the Department of Education press release in response to this claim. That particular claim indicated that educational reform in the State of Texas has happened largely as a solid foundation that was set back in the 1980s by Governor White, and also a particular commission that he had developed by Ross Perot. He was revolutionary at the time and implemented reform measures much like what we are advocating today, in which we are advocating smaller class sizes, which makes sense; a significant increase in funding for education; a focus on qualified teachers and making sure that we do have those qualified teachers.

Mr. Speaker, these are the measurements we have been implementing in the last 20 years, items that 20 years ago that we have been contributing to making progress as we move forward.

I would like to bring to the attention of my colleagues a cartoon that was in the Washington Post of April 1, 2000, and the young man, as we have here, and the older man who says, here is my plan to boost child literacy, by spending another \$5 billion, and then the response is, how can you afford this and your tax cut? The response: Hey, this is my reading plan. Math comes later.

We are going to hear a great deal of these kinds of talks. The bottom line is we need to do the math now. The reality is, and we know that for the last 2 years we have had a surplus. Our last surplus was about \$170 billion, and it has estimated, and this is an estimation only, that for the next decade, we probably will have approximately \$170 billion to \$200 billion for the next 10 years.

The bottom line is that if we have a \$2 trillion tax cut after we figure that out, and we can do the math as this young man here did the math, the result is that what revenues are we going to have for Social Security? What revenues are we going to have for Medicare? What revenues are we going to have for education? The answer has to be none if we go with this tax cut.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to talk about the fact that the Republican opposition has basically proposed two major propositions, and that is, one, vouchers, and the other, block grants. We recognize that in order to respond to these we have a variety of issues that we need to deal with, and the solutions are varied.

I want to take this opportunity, because I know we have with us some Members that have joined with me this evening, and I want to acknowledge the fact that we have the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO), and since she is here with me, I want to ask her, since she has done some great, tremendous work, and I want to ask her to comment. I thank the gentlewoman from California for joining me this evening, and I yield to her at this time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, it is really important for us to acknowledge that this administration and the congressional Democrats have been at the forefront on educational reform and improving our public schools and helping to ensure that our students have the basic skills to succeed in this upcoming global economy of ours.

Some of the points that I needed to make sure that I brought out and hit upon is that we have been trying for a very lengthy time to keep Hispanic children in schools. We have made that a priority, to help Hispanic students stay in school. The Hispanic education action plan targeted more than \$30 million to help transform schools with high dropout rates, especially districts that have populations that are largely migrant workers. I say to my colleagues, you do not understand, or if you lived in my area you would have a